

NOVEMBER 2003

INSIDE

PAGE

1

Officials continue to evaluate alternatives

Public meeting scheduled Nov. 19

PAGE

2

Study area map with alternatives

PAGE

3

Project area is rich in archaeological, historic resources

Public has key role in study

PAGE

4

Study schedule

Public information meeting invitation

Alternatives considered for more study

After careful consideration of comments from the public, the Advisory Committee, and state and federal agencies, the US 12 project team will continue to study several alternatives selected by the Wisconsin Department of Transportation, or WisDOT, and the Federal Highway Administration, or FHWA.

In addition to continuing to study the required "no action" and "Transportation Systems Management" (implementing low-impact, operational improvements, also known as TSM) alternatives, four more alternatives were determined to warrant detailed study in the Environmental Impact Statement, or EIS.

Each of the four alternatives proposed for more study has been shown to improve future regional and local mobility conditions, and each will be presented in detail at a public information meeting Nov. 19. Detailed analysis and quantifying the extent of benefits, impacts and costs of these alternatives is part of the ongoing study process.

During the draft EIS stage,



US 12 project team members will continue a detailed alternatives analysis with input from citizens and public agencies.

where the US 12 project is currently at, the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA, requires that all reasonable alternatives be considered and discussed in detail.

Identifying and analyzing all alternatives is key to NEPA's goal of using objective decision-making to find transportation solutions that best preserve and protect environmental and community resources. In fact, the alternatives analysis process is so important that it is referred to as the "heart of the EIS."

A successful alternatives

analysis should explain why and how the particular range of project alternatives was developed, including what kinds of public and agency input was used. The analysis should also explain why and how other alternatives were eliminated from consideration. WisDOT has submitted four recommended alternatives to state and federal agencies for their review and comment. Detailed study will begin after agency concurrence on the selected alternatives.

continued, Page 2

TO CONTACT US

Scott Simmons

WisDOT District 1 project manager
Phone: (608) 246-5444

E-mail: scott.simmons@dot.state.wi.us

Matt Hintze

HNTB Corp. project manager
Phone: (608) 294-5000

E-mail: mhintze@hntb.com

Project Web site:

www.dot.state.wi.us/projects/d1/us12fort/index.htm

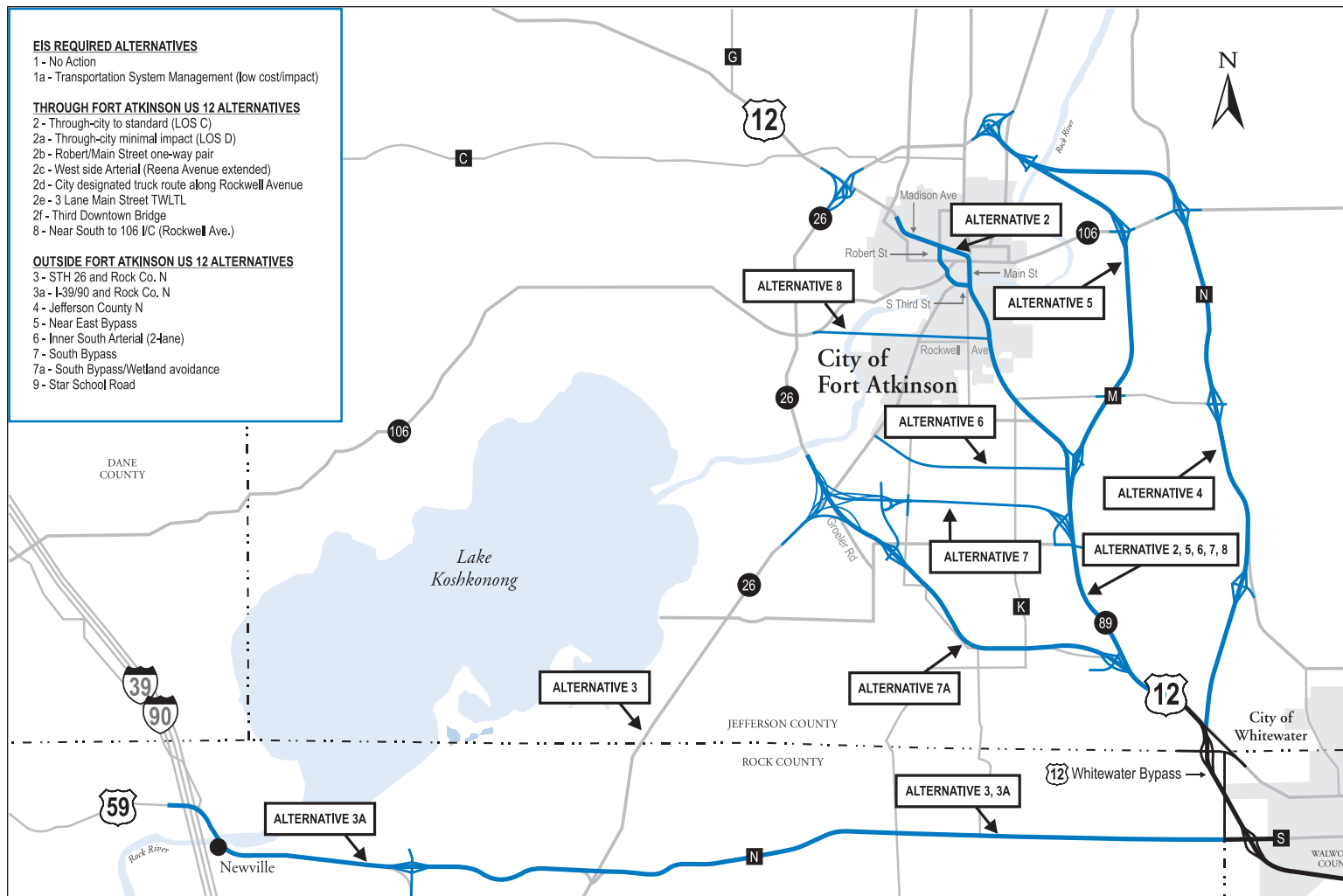
Public information meeting scheduled for Nov. 19

The public is invited to attend an informational meeting Wednesday, Nov. 19, that will address the alternatives. A presentation will be given at 7 p.m. WisDOT project officials will be available to answer questions and collect comment forms.

Public information meeting

Wednesday, Nov. 19, 2003,
Open house 6:30 to 9 p.m.; presentation 7 p.m.
Luther Elementary School
205 Park St., Fort Atkinson

Study area and alternatives



Continued from Page 1

In addition to the “no action” and TSM options, the remaining four US 12 alternatives are:

Alternative 2a – Continue to route US 12 through Fort Atkinson: The project team will continue to study a viable US 12 route through the city of Fort Atkinson. Agencies such as the Department of Natural Resources and the Environmental Protection Agency, as well as community members, want to know what can be done on the existing alignment, thereby avoiding the environmental impacts of a cross-country bypass alignment. Many through-town alternatives have already been considered, but an alternative that meets the US highway’s design requirements but does not have significant impacts on the downtown historic districts has not been found. This alternative may become a combination of

some of the eliminated downtown alternatives with the TSM measures. Even if this alternative cannot be improved to meet the identified needs, it will still be analyzed in detail based on agency requests and public expectation.

Alternative 3 – WIS 26 and Rock County Highway N: This alternative meets the project’s purpose and need, and there is public support to study this route further. The project Advisory Committee, state and federal agencies, and the citizens of the town of Koshkonong have expressed their interest in carrying forward an alternative that uses Rock County Highway N. Advantages to this alternative include the already-planned widening of WIS 26 and use of an existing highway to lower costs and environmental impacts.

Alternative 7 – Southern Fort Atkinson

Bypass: This alternative meets purpose and need, and there is public support to study it further. This is the alignment included on the city of Fort Atkinson Master Plan. An advantage to this alternative is improved access to the city’s south side industrial park. The roadway alignment may still be modified somewhat to avoid or minimize impacts on wetlands, habitat, farms and homes.

Alternative 7a – Southern Fort Atkinson Bypass with Wetland Avoidance: This alternative meets the project’s purpose and need. It avoids impacting high-quality wetlands, but agricultural operations would face greater impacts. As preliminarily developed, this alternative would roughly follow the Poeppel Road, McIntyre Road and Creamery Road alignments but will avoid using existing roadways.



Environmental justice: Equity sought in transportation planning

Public involvement is for absolutely everyone.

WisDOT is committed to equity and fairness, and it wants to ensure that no one is excluded from the US 12 project decision-making process.

Identifying and addressing disproportionately high and adverse effects on minority, low-income, disabled or elderly individuals will help achieve environmental justice and promote nondiscrimination in your community.

If you know of anyone who may be impacted by this project and whose voice is not being heard, please contact WisDOT District 1 Project Manager Scott Simmons at (608) 246-5444.

Luther Elementary School in Fort Atkinson, site of the Nov. 19 public information meeting, is wheelchair accessible. For more information or to place a request for assistance at the meeting, please call Simmons or the Wisconsin Telecommunications Relay System at (800) 947-3529.

Project area rich in historic and archaeological resources

Archaeological and historic surveys are under way in the US 12 project area to determine if the alternatives being considered for the roadway would affect historic sites and buildings or archaeological resources.

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act requires that FHWA consider any effects its projects might have on historic properties, which are properties included on the National Register of Historic Places or that meet the criteria to be placed on the register.

More than 2,000 years ago, woodland Indians inhabited Wisconsin, and by their custom constructed mounds of various shapes including animal or effigy mounds. Examples of this culture can be found around Lake Koshkonong where Oneota Indians established villages. Today, 11 mounds in Indian Mound county park have been left relatively undisturbed. WisDOT anticipates that there may be other high-quality archaeological sites in the study area.

Any potential disruption of culturally significant sites is of tremendous concern to the department. Project officials take great care to identify any potential impacts to sites located in close proximity to the proposed US 12 alignments.

If the properties will be impacted, Section 106 requires WisDOT to consult with an appropriate party – either a state historic preservation officer or tribal historic preservation officer. Other indi-



The Burrows/Warner House, above, part of the Burrows/Warner Farmstead on County Trunk Highway N in Lima Township, is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The house was built in 1839.

viduals or organizations may also be “consulting parties” if they show interest in the project due to its legal or economic effects, or its effects on historic properties. If you would like to be a consulting party, please contact Connie White at (608) 294-5006 or e-mail cmwhite@hntb.com.

For more information or to obtain a pamphlet titled “A Citizen’s Guide to Section 106 Review” contact Connie White or log on to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation Web site – www.achp.gov/.

Public involvement is key to study success

WisDOT has made a strong effort to keep the public involved and informed throughout the US 12 study phases.

Public input was very important during the needs assessment portion of the project, which began in March 2001. Officials held public information meetings and received input from two local focus groups. A phone survey was conducted among residents. WisDOT found that regional mobility demands, growing safety and congestion problems, and public consensus that something should be done were reasons to look at improvement options for the US 12 corridor.

Public participation is also at the forefront of the EIS process. WisDOT asked several local

groups for representatives to join an advisory committee; the resulting committee includes two members from the Jefferson County Board, two from Fort Atkinson, two from Koshkonong, one from the Friends of Koshkonong US Highway 12 Committee, one from the Greater Fort Atkinson Chamber of Commerce, and one from the Rock County Board.

The Advisory Committee has been helpful in reviewing alternatives, providing information to the study team, and suggesting which alternatives should go forward for detailed study. The committee will continue to assist in the process, review the progress of the EIS and give the study team input from the local perspective.

US 12 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Study time line

	2003												2004										
	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.
Consensus-building meetings held																							
Traffic and land-use studies conducted																							
Reconstruction alternatives identified																							
Public information meeting No. 2																							
Reconstruction alternatives refined																							
Public information meeting No. 3																							
Draft EIS reviewed, published																							
Public hearing on EIS held																							
Public issues addressed/final EIS published																							
Record of Decision published																							

Scott Simmons
WisDOT District 1
2101 Wright St.
Madison, WI 53704

YOU'RE INVITED

to the US 12 Environmental Impact Statement

Public Information Meeting

Date: Wednesday, Nov. 19, 2003

Time: Open house from 6:30 to 9 p.m. with a presentation at 7 p.m.

Place: Luther Elementary School
205 Park St., Fort Atkinson

Study Team members will be on hand to answer questions.